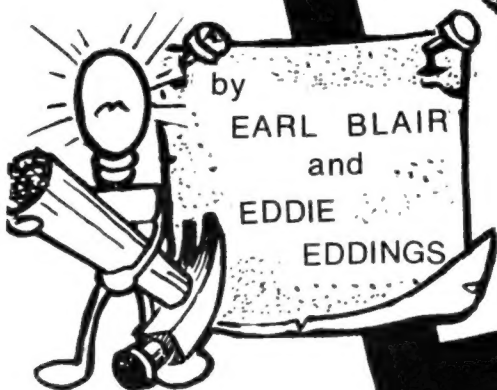


On The Drawing Board

No 16

WALT DISNEY'S



WHAT'S NEWS BY DAVID KALER

This report is basically a continuation of that presented last month in that it concerns the many and varied changes going on within the industry.

As previously pointed out, National is working under the influence of Carmine Infantino and many important changes are being made in the titles and in the men behind the titles.

House of Mystery has now dropped both Dial H For Hero and the J'onn J'onzz strip. Tales of the Unexpected is to be labeled "The Unexpected" from now on. Deadman will be come a regular feature in Strange Adventures, rather than the bi-monthly feature as reported last issue. Coming up shortly in a future issue of Showcase National recreates a couple of their old western heroes in Johnny Thunder (unrelated to the JT from All Star Comics and the JSA) and the Trigger Twins.

Joe Orlando has been made an editor at National now and is handling two titles at the present: Scooter and the Inferior Five. Joe is also planing something new for a future Showcase and both his regular books and Showcase book will feature Wally Wood's inking of Joe's pencils. On top of that, Joe has managed to talk Steve Ditko into trying to come up with something new for National.

Marvel still continues in its policy of keeping most of its plans safely guarded so as to surprise fans. Marvel is constantly shifting their ideas around to come up with a better solution and in the process many previous ideas are discarded. Thus it is that the shift of characters between books as reported last month may never see the light--or there is the possibility that it simply won't occur for a few more months.

By now you should all of seen the new character we reported as due--that is, Captain Marvel. The character is created by Stan and while Stan wrote the first tale, Roy will be handling the next few. In case you're wondering, Marvel Super Heroes will be the permanent replacement for Fantasy Masterpieces and Marvel will continue to reprint material from the 40's and 50's. The one important change is that the fantasy/sf stories will be dropped and the book will center its reprints on the super heroes.

Fans can look for a 22-page battle between the Submariner and the Hulk in the near future...and soon the X-Men will face the Frankenstein monster only to learn he is an android. The new title coming up from Marvel (as previously announced) will be a war book featuring Lt. Savage and his something-or-other Leath-er-necks. (Who are we to quibble over details?)

Charlton has now dropped their remaining two hero books--Judo Master and Blue Beetle--leaving them with only 26 titles now being printed.

Latest Charlton sales reports indicated a jump of many points (bringing in more profits, naturally) on many of the non-hero books. Unfortunately, the hero books themselves remained consistantly low.

Both the war and western titles from Charlton are making great improvement and even the love-titles sell continuously well. The two titles featuring ghost/supernatural tales are among the top-sellers from Charlton and will certainly be continued.

As this is being typed, a major policy conference will be held at Charlton within a few days. This meeting will determine what sort of new titles will be established to replace the now-defunct titles. One of Dick Giordano's major ideas is to bring out a second Premiere-type book so that he will have the means with which to test the market each month for new ideas and concepts. The present Premiere book is only bi-monthly. It is not unlikely that the results of this conference will be available soon enough to enable their inclusion in this issue--in which case more information can be found farther on...



Aurora, the plastic-people, continue to churn-out models of popular comic strip heroes. Their latest contribution to the racks is a model of Batman's Bat-cycle and Batboat. Each of these is a dollar. If you're a Penguin fan, you'll soon be able to pick up a model of this character as he is in vicious battle against our capped crusader. This kit, too, is a dollar and all will be released to stores soon.

If you're a Tarzan fan you might wanna pick up the new model of ERB's famous tree-swinging. This one's been in the works for over two years and at one time the entire project was shelved. Cost, again, is \$1. And hey! If you've really got a Tarzan fetish you can pick up a package of figurines of Tarzan and the animals of his jungle realm. The Tarzan figure is only three inches high in this kit, but think of all the little animals you get to play with! Yep, it's a dollar, too.

Names In The News

ROBERT HALL, once radio's Green Hornet and the man whose voice soothed listeners on CBS radio's "Music 'Til Dawn," died this month of cancer at the age of 42 in New Rochelle, NY. He was the voice of the Green Hornet from 1944 until 1947, one of several who played the role during the programs 20 years of popularity. He was also announcer for other top radio and television shows, but is best known for his smooth baritone voice on "Music 'Til Dawn."



BOB POWELL, the talent whose pencils brought to life a host of characters including Mr. Mystic, the Man in Black, Sheena, the Shadow, Jet Powers, the Avenger and Muscleman, passed away on October 1st. During the last few years his work was found primarily in the art-department of SICK Magazine and in the many bubble gum cards he worked on. He was 50 years old, but for over 25 of those years he produced some very fine work for both comic books and strips.

From the out-set of his career, his wonderful style was always recognizable--always good. His Giant-Man for Marvel was probably the best of all the artists to handle that character. His Jet Powers and Avenger were two the many fine titles he worked on for ME (Magazine Enterprises) during the late 40's and early 50's. It is now unlikely, however, that his finest piece of work was circulated around the country every Sunday in the guise of Mr. Mystic--a magician who could give Dr. Strange, Mandrake and the rest of the comic-strip lot a good run for their money.

His work will be sorely missed by many.

Late Notes & Notices

WITH BO

From Paul Leiffer comes word of a comic book published by the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, 666 Euclid, Cleveland, Ohio. #1 is free for the asking and #2 is in preparation. It is prepared by Allen Saunders (of Mary Worth/Steve Roper fame), but he doesn't know who the artist is.

From several sources comes word that Rich Buckler, publisher of Super Hero, has gone-pro by selling a four page filler strip on George Washington to King. (Rich, who just recently sent us a new batch of illoes, was perhaps too shy to tell us himself.) Congrats!

I sure don't want to have it on my conscience that I was responsible for turning an otherwise decent person into a reader of the Reader's Digest, however, there was an article on Peanuts in the July '67 ish. It's by Barnaby Conrad and is reprinted from the NY Times Magazine.

Greg Jones tells us that a rumor seems to have gotten into comics fandom to the effect of Hal Foster terminating his famous Prince Valiant comic strip. We quote Mr. Foster: "I don't know where you got the impression that the Prince Valiant story was coming to an end. Such is not the case and it is going ahead better than ever."

articles of interest:

Los Angeles Times, July 24: Hanna-Barbera cartoon studios.

LA Times, Aug 12: Walter Lantz creator of Woody Woodpecker.

This Week Magazine, Sept. 17: Jim Shooter, the 15 yr old who writes Superman for DC.



Boob-Tube Reviews by Dave!

Now that we are well into the new television season, I guess every fan who has the slightest interest has seen the new Saturday morning hero-oriented TV shows. I'd like to review some of the most notable here as I see them...

ABC has been lucky in getting the rights to show the two new series' based on the Marvel characters of Spiderman and the Fantastic Four. The Hanna-Barbera handling of the FF is weak even though they do follow in the framework of many of the original stories. The characters have lost some of their spark and originality. Spidey comes off as the better of the two both in animation and in story-line. While washed-down a little, Spidey, JJJameson and Betty Brant come off much like their comic-book-counterparts. What is surprising about the Spider-Man show, however, is that the animation is by Grantray-Lawrence--the same people responsible for the first Marvel cartoons--and their handling of Spidey is superior to that of Hanna-Barbera!

CBS, on the other hand, has been straddled with an hour of Superman-Aquaman stuff that lacks both charm and characterization. Once in a while there will come a particular story that will be good, but this is not the norm as with the ABC cartoons. As for the special cartoon featuring the other National characters--well, they're a complete waste of animation talent and time. Everything is so horribly slanted at the pre-school age group that one finds it difficult to sit through. They give the impression that Mighty Mouse changes into different heroes (as per Robby Reed) to battle the hostile aliens of the universe. Too many changes have been made in the powers and origins of the characters of Aquaman, Green Lantern and the Atom and the characters have been milked-down into a papp that makes one wonder if even the pre-schooler could stand it.



the incredible HULK

If you tire of super heroes, you might possibly find relief in Space Ghost which is back for its second season--and it's rather fun to watch thanks to the talents of Alex Toth. Ditto for the Herculooids series. The return of the Johnny Quest show to the tv-screen points out the sort of work that can be done on a cartoon adventure series both in story and animation. For laughs try George of the Jungle (produced by the Bullwinkle/Hoppity Hooper geniuses) and the Road Runner. Ignore Super President, Birdman, Moby Dick and the rest.



Fawcett has released another volume of Andy Capp strips and I highly recommend it as one of the truly funny strips to ever appear. The name of the book is Andy Capp Strikes Back, #d1838, and sells for 50¢.

There is a color reprint of the hardbound "A Charlie Brown Christmas" now selling under soft cover from Signet at 60¢. It's P3258.



The really big treat of the season, however, comes from Simon & Shuster in the form of "Prehysterical POGO (In Pandemonia)" which sells for \$1.50.

POGO's flight of fancy with Albert and Churchy is now compiled in one volume. While all the strips, both daily and Sunday, are not in the book, the highlights of the story--including the greeting card carved in the mountain and the handshaking battle between the Loan arranger and the Oriental dragon-rider are there. Pogo fans with incomplete collections

should take careful note of the ad on the back cover denoting issues still available from S&S. (Dave's mention of this new book brings to mind a personal problem I've been having: finding copies of the Pogo coloring book mentioned in OTDB some months back. It evidently was never distributed in St. Louis. I will pay or trade generously for one or more copies (could use about 4). If you can provide me with these, please write.--Ed.)

Older fans--and fans of the early pulp magazines in particular--may enjoy two volume series by Frank Gruber on writing for the pulps and how it was during its time in the pulp-jungles of Manhattan. While no stories are reprinted, Gruber tells how it was to write in those days and relates many anecdotes on people like Max Brand, Mort Weisinger, Lester Dent, Julius Schwartz, and others. The book is \$3.95 and is published by Sherbourne Press, Los Angeles, Calif. 90035 (sorry, but that's the only address given.)

A paper back book recently published by Bantam (S3614) may interest some fans in that several chapters talk about reminiscing about children's toys and the old radio shows and magazines. The title of the book is "In God We Trust" and it's by Jean Shepherd selling for 75¢.

Unless you ignore the paper-back racks at your drug stores when buying comics, you've probably seen the two new Lancer reprints of Marvel's Fantastic Four and Daredevil. Both sell for 50¢...



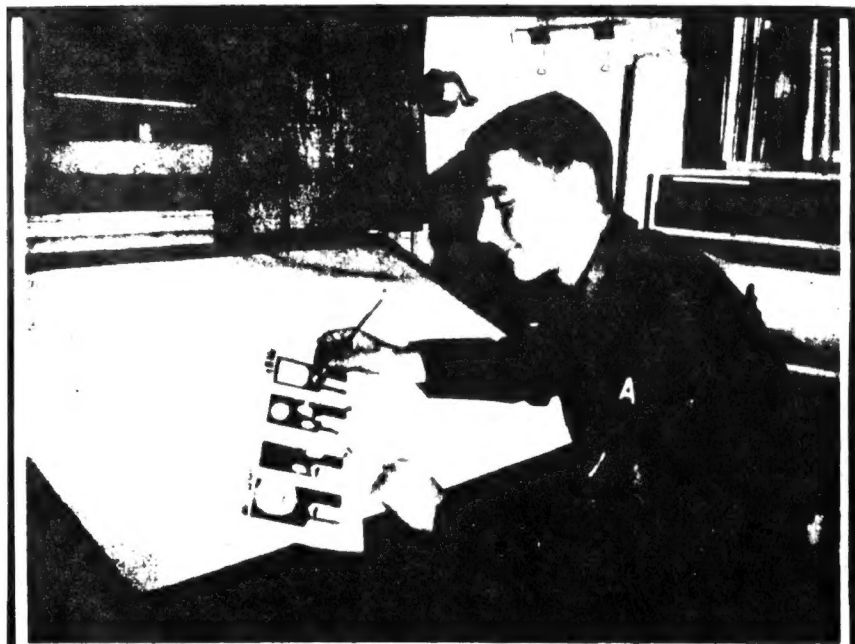
THE FANTASTIC FOUR RETURN
72-169

The Fantastic Four with guest star Sub-Mariner smash their way through more exciting adventures.



HERE COMES... DAREDEVIL
72-170

In his first solo appearance Daredevil shows why the Marvel Super-Heroes are bestsellers.



CARTOONIST AT WORK--PFC Bill Dubay, command illustrator for XVIII Airborne Corps and Ft. Bragg, works on his new comic strip for the Ft. Bragg newspaper, the Paraglide. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO By Sp4 Joyce Keef)

Bill Dubay, a fan most everyone is probably familiar with, has been one hell of a busy soldier--but not in the familiar sense. When the army found out he could draw, they made him Post Illustrator and set him up in a pretty nice way. His most recent accomplishment is a comic strip produced for the post newspaper involving a living garbage can. The strip (samples of which can be seen on the next page) is also due to appear in another non-army paper which will give it a circulation over 50,000! The strip has no name, but Bill is offering several pieces of original art and a couple of original strips to him who comes up with the best suggestion. You can get to him at the address below...and you might drop us a line of opinion for OTDB...

Bill Dubay, #1 O'Kelley's TR CT; SpringLake, NC 29390

GULLY FOYLE



GULLY FOYLE, for the uninitiated, is, simply, one of the most beautiful comic strips ever to be created. Gully Foyle, based on the SF classic "The Stars My Destination," by Alfred Bester, comes from the Australian pen of Stan and Reg Pitt.

15 Sunday episodes of Gully Foyle were sent to the syndicates for inspection in the hopes of syndicating the strip. John Ryan, business agent for the artist duo, informs us that the greatest response came from the Ledger syndicate (who handles Batman). They are currently in the process of

attempting to work out the legal

bugs (most of which come up as a result of the many miles separating the syndicate and the creator. We will keep you informed of the progress in this respect. In the meantime, we suggest all fans pick up copies of Star Studded Comics 11, advertised elsewhere in this issue, and read John Ryan's excellent article on Gully Foyle. There are two full page reproductions with numerous interior illustrations.



Illustrations copyright '67 by S. Pitt & Associates.

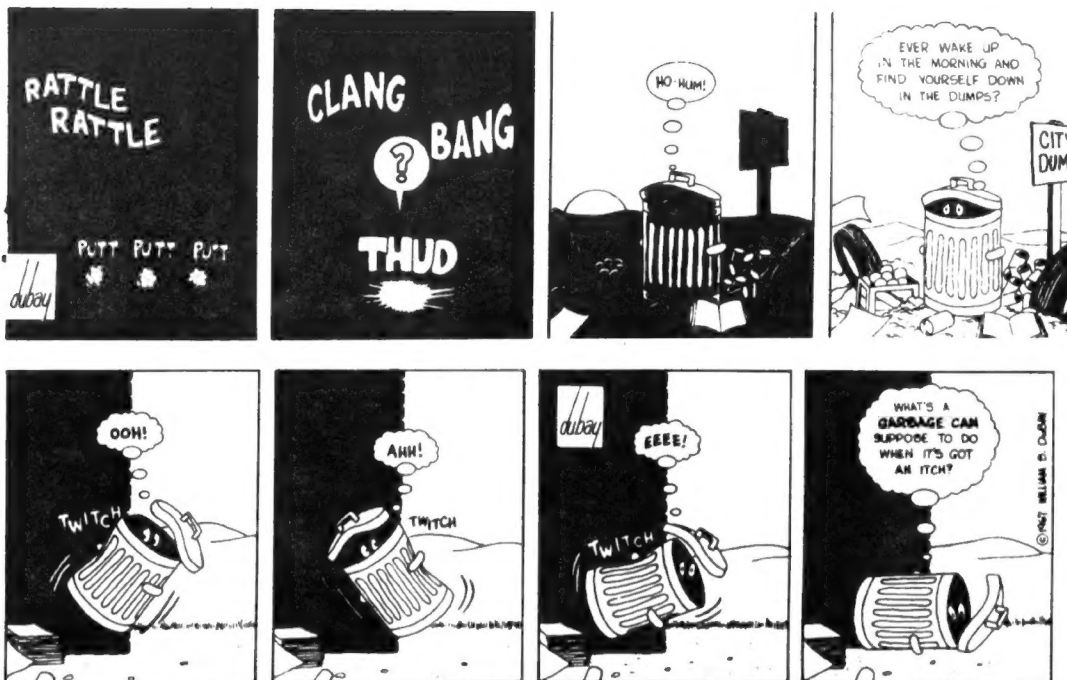


MARVEL SUPER-HEROES
FEATURING:
CAPTAIN
MARVEL

Captain Marvel, strange visitor from another planet who came to earth with powers and abilities far beyond those of mortal men (and who bears a striking resemblance to a former alien tourist in his earlier days).

OTDB, always first with the scoop on the poop, presents this senses-shattering, earth-shaking, pulse-pounding, illustration (to your humble left) stolen unmercifully from the 12th issue of Marvel Super Heroes.

Cap is copyrighted in 1967.



In his letter, Bill points out some of the pitfalls of success as a cartoonist: "Since the strip has started, I've been invited to parties, fashion shows, a play here, and social functions such as that I was segregated from before because of my status as an enlisted man, not an officer." Sort of a word of "warning" for you would-be artists in fandom, eh?

Bill also cranks out a thing called "Hunting Tips" which is a one panel thing. I'd run one of them, but we've shot enough room as it is...

Bill has also done a really great cover illustration that will most likely see print on OTDB 18. (Next ish has George Metzger.)

We would like to direct your attention to Bill's advertisement which is included with the issue

His Magic Dragon book will be published professionally, tho copies can be had through him personally (when they are ready which won't be for some time yet.)

(I'll bet some of you didn't believe his nose was as big as he always drew it! -Ed.)

I noted with much interest recently a rising tide of dissent among St. Louis residents against those Saturday morning TV shows, as witnessed by the comments below. They are reprinted from the October 22nd issue of TV Magazine which is circulated with the Post-Dispatch. I personally doubt if anything will come of it, but I felt fans would find it of interest. I personally do not agree that the violence of these shows is harmful to children, however certain of these comments have a point in stating that the Warner Brothers cartoons (Bugs Bunny, Road Runner, etc.) are better--they are far better as a matter of fact. I might point out that this came up primarily in response to a letter from a 10 year old girl who protested the new shows. --Ed.

Television Letter Box

Letters Intended for This Column Should Be Addressed to
Television Editor, TV Magazine, Post-Dispatch, St. Louis, Mo. 63101

THE FOLLOWING are excerpts from letters about cartoons for children now being presented on television Saturday mornings:

"I must protest about the trash that is being shown to all our youngsters. What has happened to the light-veined, light-hearted cartoons that used to be shown... such as 'Bugs Bunny,' 'Porky Pig,' etc.? Please program something other than the ridiculous, scary, half-animated, outer space, monster, violence-ridden shows."

"I wish to thank ABC and KTVI for presenting 'Spider Man' and 'The Fantastic Four' every Saturday morning."

"I think they are very enjoyable... I hope these wonderful cartoons continue."

"These cartoons are too far out."

"I, too, want 'Porky Pig,' 'Bugs Bunny,' etc. back. I protest 'Space Ghost,' 'Fantastic Four,' etc. Let's please have some decent old fashioned cartoons."

"The Saturday morning cartoons are terrible. I hoped after last year they would improve, but they got much worse."

"I fully agree with the ladies that complain about the awful cartoons on Saturday morning. Why doesn't one of the men come up with the idea of bringing back the Western shows, like 'The Lone Ranger,' 'Roy Rogers,' etc."

"Please can't we have more of the 'Casper,' 'Bugs Bunny' and 'Porky Pig' cartoons for the little ones who would enjoy them?"

"I am tired of all the complaints about shows on Saturday morning. Some kids don't like them, but stop to think how many kids there are that do like them."

"I do wish someone could improve the situation."

Radio has been out of the spot-light for some time now, but there may be some revival of their characters if it proves financially possible. Some publishers in Europe have become interested in using Steel Sterling and a number of Radio's other characters in hopes of competing with a growing readership for DC's Superman and Batman. These two characters have been flooding the European market as of late. Superman, once banned in France because he wore no visible mechanism for flight, is now being published again in combination with Batman. Germany finally picked up these characters and sales in that country are booming. At one time they refused to acknowledge the concept of a fictional sort of Superman (perhaps fearing competition or something) and they stuck happily by their Prince Valiant and Tarzan features to keep young audiences happy.

Milson has dropped their Fatman titles--but they intend to remain in the business by pushing their other titles. They will be bringing out their Captain Shazam character sometime in the not-too-distant future and they plan to continue the Super Green Beret book. They are also considering the possibility of a Flying Musketeers book, but only time will tell on that...

Gold Key continues to pursue new lines of interest in their publications. Their latest endeavor is a 75¢ Walt Disney book based on the new movie "Jungle Book" which is due for release soon. The book will have hard cardboard covers and will be printed in full color on a high-quality paper. Also of an experimental nature is a romance type book published in a manner similar to the Jungle Book. The art will be done in a modernistic sort of style and the story line will center around the youth in the "swinging capitols of the world." With all this experimenting going on, one wishes Western would attempt the publication of a book on the French character Asterix. They have had the rights for some time now but hesitate to go into this because of the large amounts of money they lost in trying to bring Tin Tin to the states a few years ago. Many are the high-quality foreign strips that deserve to see print in America and I for one hope that sales are high enough to lead Gold Key into making this sort of attempt.

This, again, continues the information given last month and at the beginning of this column concerning the changes in the industry...

TOWER: While Tower is out of the super-hero line, their characters may not be dead. They are considering the possibility of a set of 12 cent comics...and hoping that they could improve distribution and sales this way. They intend to continue the Tippy Teen book as its sales has been good and continues to improve.

Charlton is currently producing the smallest number of titles any one company has ever had at one time. They are down to 28 titles at this time. [I assume Dave means "of the major publishers" here...-Ed.] Dick Giordano is trying hard to find a new line of comics which will boost sales and hit a unique market of buyers. The super hero line of comics--recently dropped--had improved in sales towards the end, but not to a significant degree.

This particular portion of my column is being added some time after the first part, however, the Charlton conference mentioned previously has yet to take place. Until this conference does take place there will be nothing of particular interest coming from Charlton for the majority of fandom.



King Comics, under Bill Harris, have been trying to please more and more fans through their reprints of Alex Raymond's Flash Gordon and the new-done Phantom and Mandrake books. For the first time in many many years fans are able to purchase Raymond art for reasonable prices and there will be more to come.

With the 10th issue of Flash Gordon a new title will replace the Mandrake comic. Taking Mandrake's place will be a comic based on Raymond's Jungle Jim. Fans who have copies of the Jungle Jim comics of the late 50's will be pleased to know that King will be continuing the original numbering system beginning with #21.

What makes this Jungle Jim book even more interesting is the fact that Wally Wood and his staff will be handling the art chores which Bill Pearson and Archie Goodwin will be handling the writing. Furthermore, the fine art of Jeff Jones will fill out the issues with an original 7-page strip entitled "Balor the Barbarian." It should be most interesting to see Jones' work in full color, no?

While there are no plans afoot at present to feature any other American reprints in the King books, Bill Harris has been looking over many European comic strips to which King owns the rights. Just what form, if any, these strips would take I don't know, but this could include strips like Dan Cooper-Flying Ace, Michael Valliant (a racing car strip) and many others.

As a side note on Mr. Harris I should mention that while he did, indeed, take over the editorial chores at Warren for a time, he has since given it up. Just who will replace him there I don't yet know.

With other companies biding their time to see what develops in the industry, it would not be surprising to see some enterprising company take a chance. The Whammo people were to have released their Giant Comic by this time, but as of this writing no copies have appeared in New York. The only copies that were distributed here were those sent to the contributing professionals. Copies have not been seen in the St. Louis area to my knowledge and I would like to hear from someone who could trade or sell me a copy--Ed.

Jerry De Fuccio, one of the crew at Mad Magazine, worked up a character about a year ago called the OWL. He attempted to have the character syndicated through the newspapers to cash in on the Batman craze, but he couldn't find a buyer. Sometime this fall a large, 75¢ comic will appear featuring this character and several others. I have no information, however, on the publisher or release date.

Marvel will soon be issuing a new number-one issue of the Hulk in his own comic. Also coming out in his own publication will be Captain Marvel. Captain America takes over all of the Tales of Suspense title and Dr. Strange follows suit in Strange Tales during the same month. Sub-Mariner will take over Tales of Astonish now that the Hulk is out, though just what will become of Iron Man or the Shield series I don't know. Chances are that by the time I do find out these titles will have already appeared. The Marvel Super Heroes book will be acting as a sort of Showcase title for Marvel in addition to reprinting tales from the 40's and 50's.

With the expansion of titles at Marvel their will be a similar expansion of staff. Stan Lee is thinking of using Wayne Boring, Joe Mooney and George Papp on some of his books...as well as making greater use of Archie Goodwin as a writer.



Carmine Infantino, though no longer illustrating stories for National, has been anything but idle as production manager. He has revamped the staff on Mort Weisinger's books almost completely during the past month. Ross Andru will be doing the art for the Superman title from now on, Irv Novick will be doing the Superman stories in Action while Kurt Schaffenberger will be doing Supergirl. Curt Swan will handle the Legion of Super Heroes, Irv Novick will take over Lois Lane and Neil Adams takes over the art on the Superman/Batman team in World's Finest. The only artist remaining on his old strip is Al Plastino who hangs onto Superboy. Fans can look for new work in the writing department, too.

In Julius Schwartz' books the following changes have taken place... Irv Novick will be doing the Batman covers. Ross Andru will handle both the cover and interior art on the Flash and Brave and Bold teamups. Gil Kane will handle the art chores on the six Batman stories once featured in Detective by Carmine.

Once Joe Orlando is out of the hospital, he will take over editorial supervision of Inferior Five, Scooter and another title due to appear in a future Showcase issue. Wally Wood will be doing the inks on Joe's pencils. Orlando has chosen Winslow Mortimer to handle the Inferior Five. Due for release in March is a new title illustrated by Steve Ditko which may also come under Joe's editorial hand.

Howard Purcell, who wrote for National back in the 40's, is back doing new work for them now. (His material appeared at one time in the Johnny Peril stories he did in the old All Stars.) Joe Kubert is back doing Enemy Ace stories for Bob Kanigher--and that is good news as Enemy Ace was a darn-fine character. Bob Oskner is back doing the Jerry Lewis book and Howard Post, an idea-man with the Paramount Studio's animation office, will be writing it. Jack Sparling has taken over Plastic Man, Bomba and Metamorpho.

Meanwhile, new titles are being added as old ones die off. Sugar and Spike will be dropped from the regular line up and turned into an annual, summer-special each year. Sheldon Meyer, once editor for All Star, will be writing other material for National now. Jack Springer who has worked for other companies (and whose material appears most recently in the Evergreen Review) will be doing a new book called The Secret Six. For those of you not familiar with Jack's Evergreen work, I can testify to his talents and something from him should be worth watching for! Deadman will be taken out of Strange Adventures and given his own book shortly--thus replacing Metamorpho which is due to be dropped. Oh, yes--the Secret Six replaces Bob Hope which is being dropped after many years.

Carmine has shown an interest in bringing many talents from the newspaper strip field into National's staff. One prominent artist of an adventure strip has begun to write the Flash and will be doing some of the Superman tales for Weisinger. A prominent inking artist in newspaper strips will be doing some of this work for DC soon--he (the same inker) has worked as a ghost on several of the major strips for a few years.

All in all--surprising changes notwithstanding--the next few months should be most interesting for comic fans. Whether or not they prove to be financially successful is another matter--and only time will see...



Presenting The 1966 Alley Awards

It is with much regret that I am forced to again inform you that our presentation of the Alley Awards results is incomplete. Unfortunately, before completing his survey and writing up the results, Dave was taken ill and forced to spend some time in the hospital for a stomach condition. Rather than allow the news to stagnate during his stay in the hospital we are publishing a 2nd portion of the results here--with the remainder slated to appear next month. Dave should be back on his feet by the time this issue appears.

I, personally, have been considering many ideas and concepts for improving the Alley Awards for next year's voting. Ballots must be sent out soon to some nominating committee now in order that the voting can be held quickly and efficiently--and so that the results can be in the hands of the readers much sooner than this year. Thus I would appreciate hearing the comments from any and all fans who feel they have a valid suggestion as to how the categories might be improved or a better way in which voting may be conducted. I would particularly like to hear from those fans who acted as the nominating committee for this year's awards. With Dave ill and having many other problems and responsibilities, I may be forced to handle this myself.

--Robert Schoenfeld--



BEST PRO WORK OF 1966

1. Best Editor	
Stan Lee	488
Dick Giordano	384
Julius Schwartz	367
Bill Harris	298
Murray Boltinoff	227

2. Best Writer	
Stan Lee	554
Gardner Fox	412
John Broome	345
Roy Thomas	291
P. A. M.	222

3. Best Pencil Artist	
Al Williamson	469
Jack Kirby	399
Steve Ditko	322
Russ Manning	316
Carmino Infantino	276

4. Best Inking Artist	
Wally Wood	463
Murphy Anderson	421
Joe Sinnott	326
Joe Kubert	294
Sid Greene	281

5. Best Cover	
Flash Gordon 1	353
Thunder Agents 4	347
Showcase 60	346
Green Lantern 46	286
Spirit 1	247

6. Best Coloring	
Flash Gordon	361
Magnus	340
Hawkman	314
Thunder Agents	252
Tarzan	227
Daredevil	218

7. Best full-length Story (17 or more pages)	
How Green Was My Goblin	
Spiderman 39	369
The Torch That Was	
FF Annual 4	364
Beyond the Sinister Barrier	
Showcase 61	320
Cloud Cloddie Go Home	
Magnus 16	317
Prince Peril's Power Play	
Green Lantern 45	268

8. Best Feature Story (6-12 pages in length)	
Return To Mongo	
Flash Gordon 1	422

The Blue Beetle	
Captain Atom 83	324
Hate of Hooded Hangman	
Detective 355	269
Death Trap of Mongo	
Flash Gordon 2	265
Where Stalks the Mummy	
Thunderbolt 55	247

9. Best Regular Short Feature (6 pages or less)	
Tales of Asgard in Thor	431
Clawfang in Unearthly	330
Aliens in Magnus	329
Flash Gordon in Phantom	301
Bros of Spear in Tarzan	263

BEST FANZINE SECTION 1966

1. Best All Article Zine	
Batmania	221
Tint/Slam Bang	221
Rocket's Blast	203
Yancy St. Journal	182
Vanguard	180

2. Best All Comic Zine	
Odd	178
Comic Book	110
Magnum Opus	105
Intrigue	94
Fawn the Dark Eyed	88

3. Best All Fiction Zine	
Batwing	176
Tales of Suspense	169

4. Best Article/Strip Zine	
Fantasy Illustrated	332
Trumpet	207
Voice of Comidom	199
Bombshell	102

5. Best Strip/Fiction Zine	
Star Studded Comics	182
Stories of Suspense	94
Mastermind	56

6. Best One Shot Publication	
Spirit by Aprill	150
RB Special #6	102
All Stars	86
"Hey Look" on Kurtz-	
man by Benson	54

7. Best Article/Fiction Zine	
Comic Art	115
Golden Age	109
Jeddak	71
Ymir	64
Mask & Cape	57

8. Best Article on Comic Books	
Quality Comics Group	191
Superheroes/Folklore	168
Psychoanalysis of	
Superman	161
Inner or Other on	
Superman	146
Wings Comics	144

9. Best Article on Newspapers	
Pride of the Navy	152
The Caniff School	144
Comics Castro Style	126
Flash Gordon and the	
Asteroid Miners	93

10. Best Fan Column	
What's News	369
Graphic Story Review	314
Rocketeer Gossip	297
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ACADEMY FORUM

on the Academy...

Dave Bibby
40 Hillside Ave.
Verona, NJ. 07044

I was a member of the Executive Board at one time and it is very true that many members of the Board partici-

pated in name only. Therefore, I am in agreement with the suggestion to reduce the membership of the Board from 50 to 25. This may be cutting out some very qualified people, but if our 25 members work, the sacrifice will have been worthwhile.

A Board-only newsletter is indeed a must. Paul Gambaccini's FORUM was perfect, but had the shortcoming of being published by a fan whose interest was sporadic and probably outweighed his ability at the time. Whatever the case, this mag should make the scene monthly at the least--with special issues when the need arises. Your suggestion, Bob, that the zine be published by some fan other than the ExecSec is valid, provided this other secretary owned his own duplicator and is known to be skilled with it. I think that pretty well goes without saying, Dave.--Ed./

I disagree with you, Bob, on the contents of the Who's Who. I can't imagine anything more boring than reading a zine composed of nothing but names and addresses. This other information--age, marital status, occupation, etc.--merely adds an air of friendliness to an otherwise drab publication. Of course, the simple solution to this might be to allow fans to print what they want to. If a fan happens to be a white slaver and does not want others to know, he simply leaves the occupation area blank. (It is my understanding that this Who's Who is not being published for entertainment value as most zines are--but rather as a public service sort of thing for the benefit of fans who can use the extensive listing of fan addresses. This is fine for publishers, dealers and even to collectors. If it is published for its practical useage, cluttering it up with miscellaneous information will only impair its usefulness. Furthermore, one look at the last Who's Who will prove that we can't allow fans to print what they want because they will get carried away. I recall such occupations as "lover" and others.--Ed./

Since I missed the Kaler/Thompson debate in the last two issues, I'm not qualified to mention it. However, I do feel that the time for talking, planning and theorizing is over--it's time to ACT. If the Academy has only 72 members as you say, let's get 25 of them organized into a Board and get things done. If elections are to be held this year, plans must be made now to prepare for it as some fans may wish to do a little politicking.

Gary Brown
USF 1700
Univ of So. Fla.
Tampa, Fla. 33620

The way I see it, there MUST be an election of Exec Sec and Board before the end of the year. It's obvious that Dave cannot handle all the

work on his own--and we owe it to him to lend a hand. With a board or cabinet of some kind things would be easier for Dave and this would be beneficial to the members themselves. Once this Board is elected, perhaps the Who's Who, new Comic Reader and Guide Book projects can become more than simply good suggestions.

Secondly, I would like to see an improvement in the relationship between the ExecSec and the members. I feel that after paying out \$2 in dues a fan deserves to at least receive some sort of form letter or card from the Secretary welcoming him to the Academy and perhaps explaining parts of it. Furthermore, there must be a monthly column in some zine from the ExecSec to keep members informed. If the "official newsletter" is OTDB, let's see it there, by God.



Doug Potter
1506 Zuber Dr.
Galena Pk., Tex. 77547

You mentioned in the Academy Forum that the Academy has almost \$700 in its treasury. I don't know what it took to

finance this summer's Academy Con, but it seems to me that the funds could have been found--and should have been found--to finance issues of OTDB in July and August. On the other hand, if those fans who complained about financing OTDB through the treasury got their way, and Kaler is financing it through his own pocket, I can understand his being under a good deal of financial pressure. (Doug: Dave does, yes, pay for the greatest part of each issue of OTDB out of his own pocket. Yes, OTDB is the Academy zine, but there are procedures necessary to follow before anyone can dip into the Academy funds to pay for anything. Furthermore, with what it costs to do OTDB each month, the Treasury wouldn't last two years and thus, something else must be found. The Gateway Club has been working on the prospect of an ad-zine devoted entirely to ads for fanzines. Information sheets have gone out already to most zine editors and sheets are available to anyone who didn't get one for the asking. This ad-zine will have rates set at such a level as to make it cheap enough for all zine eds to advertise liberally (\$6 a page) and yet bring in a certain amount of profit besides. If we can reach 300 subscribers, the profit from this ad-zine will make OTDB almost entirely self-supporting. The first issue of this ad-zine will be circulated free of charge in a future OTDB. The 2nd issue will be sold by subscription only. Please support it.--Ed./

If OTDB was not published those two months because Dave didn't have the time to do the gathering, I suggest that Dave either devote his time fully to the post of ExecSec or to the post of news-man for the Academy Mag. The worst thing for him to do is to over-extend himself weakening both jobs.

I also agree with you on the necessity of a permanent Alley Ballot. Until this is done, the results will be simply taken in stride and they will remain a farce until some permanence can be given to the categories. This year there was some question about where Wit-zend might compete and it was finally omitted altogether. At present we have two kinds of alleys--silver and golden--why not a third for such distinguished publications which cannot be categorized?? We might call it the Academy Award for Distinguished Achievement in the field. Kaler made some excuse that Warren wasn't included in the Alleys because their publications weren't read by enough fans to warrant their inclusion and because they had no real competition. I contend that a comic strip is a comic strip irregardless of the subject matter or in what sort of magazine it appears. I also feel that Kaler's one-man decision was a breach of authority. The decision was not his to make and he is not the one to determine what we should or should not include in our awards. This should be up to fandom as a whole since no one is restricted from voting.

Perhaps there is yet no category into which all these publications will fit, but this does not justify leaving them out of those categories in which they could fit--such as Best Cover, etc. Furthermore, I can understand Dave's polling the old Board and other prominent fans to determine the eligible magazines, but I would like to know who was polled to determine the categories themselves! Some of these categories are worthless and others need to be added. Perhaps Doug's suggested award for Distinguished Achievement might be given to the winner of that category I myself suggested, the Miscellaneous Magazines such as Mad, Creepy, Witzend and others.--Ed.7

I also agree, Bob, that Kaler has no right to hold up the Alleys to please the attendees of the NYCon. We are the ones who voted...and I'll wager that a very small percentage of the con attendees voted.



Bill Martin
30 No. Mayfield
Chicago, Ill. 60644

Since everyone seems to have his own pet pieves on the Academy, I'd like to air one of mine: I see no logical

reason why the Academy Con must be held in NY every year. Sure, the ExecSec lives there...but who is to say where the next one will live...or the one after that. With a new officer election forthcoming in the Academy ranks, we may find our head anywhere in the nation. Science Fiction fans have always found the rotating "World Con" a good idea and each year different cities must bid for the location. If you have flipped through this issue, you will undoubtedly have noticed my plug for St. Louis' bid for the World SF Con in St. Louis. 1969 may seem far away now, but the bidding will take place at the '68 Con which is in San Francisco. I'm not too involved in this personally, but we have a local SF club that's working hard on it. A World Con is really big business--and its proportions would startle many fans. But to get back to the issue, I agree with you Bill that we might establish a World Con sort of tradition in a revolving Academy Con. Some fans will say that the pros live in NY for the most part, but I don't think that this in itself is too important--what is important is that this is the con where your largest portion of fans attend and it is to this con that the ExecSec must attend. And, too, some pros have been persuaded to attend cons in other cities.--Ed.7

At one time I was rather angry with DC for observing the Code's request not to print addresses in their letter page. However, a recent incident has somewhat changed my viewpoint. Recently Charlton published a letter from a fan in England who stated that he was interested in exchanging comics with an American fan. Lacking a foreign correspondent, I wrote him asking about super hero titles. As it turned out, he wanted to swap comics for photos of half-nude male movie-stars. I wrote back saying that I didn't indulge in this sort of collecting and that terminated the correspondence...but I can't help but wonder what the result might of been if he'd of hooked some younger fan.

Lastly, the Chicago collectors have reorganized, Bob, and we are looking for fans of comic books, sf, or movie materials. Membership is open to anyone in the Chicago area or its suburbs. Fans can contact me.

Bob Cosgrove
58 Massachusetts Ave.
Braintree, Mass. 02185

Your OTDB free suggestion seems like a good one, but what real difference is there since you will still be tak-

ing in the same amount of money? I suggest a price-hike for members--and then making OTDB available to members alone. Subscribers would still save 50¢ a year and by belonging to the Academy fans would be receiving the other publications as well. I also like your suggestion of following the Burroughs Bibliophiles and making all our publications available to members only. I think this would be our biggest attraction. The difference, Bob, is that we must go all or nothing. This is to say that if we work with the Academy the funds can come directly from the Academy treasury. However, a simple price hike won't afford us much good in that we don't bring in enough money each month to publish. The kind of price hike we would have to have would be one of declaring all previous subs null and void and asking all subscribers to re-subscribe at a higher price. Can you imagine the fuss that would arise--and the fans would be justified in their complaints, too. Not only is it not really legal, but it isn't ethical either.--Ed.7

I have to disagree with your comments on the Who's Who too. Addresses mean nothing to the average fan. Types of comics and related items can provide a basic grounds for correspondence. Names and addresses would be useful only to dealers or faneds, but I do agree that marital status is none of anyone else's business.

You are being totally illogical when you say "since the WWho is an Academy project, I see no reason to let the project stagnate while we elect a board." and then turn around an answer my letter with "who could say but what a future execSec might decide to give the money to some crud publisher at the organization's loss!" Since both the Who's Who and OTDB are sanctioned in the charter, I don't see why either of them should stagnate or be delayed while we elect a Board. However, should we decide to change the charter, that is a different matter.

Tony Cabanellas
200 No. 45th St.
Belleville, Ill. 62223

I'm not sure just how to word this note, Bob, so feel free to edit it as you see fit. The difficulty is that

the note isn't too friendly in essence. I think the one thing that has hindered the Academy's growth since Dave's administration is the fact that Dave has too many different responsibilities and when this happens something must suffer. No one can expect Dave to forfeit his job or his free-lance writing, but I think he may be doing the Academy more harm than good by trying to handle every facet of the Academy. For one thing he should have someone else taking the new members registrations and recording the funds. A treasurer is what is needed. All money would be sent to him and he could supply OTDB with regular financial reports. In this way, by taking some of the load off Dave, he will have more time to spend in collecting news for the "official newsletter" and for over-seeing the administrative duties of the office.

Another office we ought to install would be some sort of publishing/corresponding secretary as per your suggestion in OTDB 15. This person would publish the Board-only newsletter (which is definitely needed) and would also handle any correspondence the Academy might find necessary--particularly along the lines of advertising.

If worst came to worse and Dave got busier than he is now, I think the wise thing to do would be to continue to serve the Academy by supplying the news for OTDB because he is in a unique position of being a pro himself and thus having access to sources of news any other New York fan might not. It could mean someone else taking over the spot in the next election, but I'm inclined to feel that handling the news for OTDB requires someone in his position--whereas there are others who could fill the post of ExecSec. In many ways, therefore, Dave is invaluable.

Naturally what happens is up to Dave himself. If he feels he can handle both the Academy administrative duties and OTDB's news...more power to him. But I simply hope that one does not come to suffer because of the other.

Since the planning of this upcoming election is, I guess, in Dave's hands, may I suggest that he announce the offices open in the next issue so as fans might decide what to run for--assuming someone does.

FANZINE INDEX

John McGeehan

EXPLANATION:

In order of their appearance: title, latest issue, date received, number of pages (number of blank pages), address, printing process, price folded, (flat), rating number. "as" indicates an amateur strip and "ERB" is an Edgar Rice Burroughs zine.

RATING SYSTEM:

- (5) a zine worth any fan's money.
- (4) for all but the most discriminating fan.
- (3) an average zine for buying after 4s and 5s.
- (2) for fans with charitable or masochistic tendencies.
- (1) for completists, friends and parents.

Apex 2--Aug 21, 18(2)pgs, Ron Kraus, 1470 W. Grace St; Chicago, Ill., 60613. Ditto, 15(10), 2.

Blackjack (formerly Super Spy) 3--Aug 5, 10pgs, Larry Walczak, 3102 Plum St., Erie, Pa., 16508. Ditto, 5¢, worth it for the small price. Don't order future issues.

C.B.S. Journal, The 2--Aug 16, 24(1)pgs, Jo Hickman, Box 785, Tullia, Tex., 79088. Ditto, 25(10), 2.

Collector, The 2--Aug 7, (5½" x 8½"), Bill Wilson, 1535 Oneida Dr; Jefferson Boro, Clairton, Pa., 15025. Litho, 15(10), 2. A good example of comic fandom's fetish for offset repro. Absolutely nothing here of value in art or text except for pretty repro and a low price. Why?

Comic Club 9--Aug 4, 24pgs, Gabe Eisenstein, 1753 Rosemary Rd; Highland Park, Ill., 60035. Ditto, 25(10), 2. There is a 1½ page interview with Mort Weisinger and a ½ page interview with Milt Caniff here--but don't ask me what kind of interview could be crushed into a mere 1½ pages.

Comic Vendor, The 5--Aug 10, 50 pgs, Alan Jadro, 40 Stevenson Ln., Upper Saddle River, NJ., 07458. Mimeo, 40(10), 4.

Concillium, The 1--Aug 8, 36(6) pgs, Dave Edwards, 5100 20th Ave., Langdale, Ala., 36864. Ditto, mimeo, Xerox, Litho, membership required, 2. This is an amateur press alliance--apa zine to the layman. It is fandom's second with Capa Alpha being the first. There are still several openings in K-a, so why someone would want to try a second apa (particularly after Biljo White failed in the attempt) is a mystery to me. But, ego or whatever, there are only 7 contribs to this first issue--my brother and I making two of them. To belong you need to contribute 25 copies of four pages of material to every issue--issues coming out quarterly. Dues is \$1 a year. Good luck.

Concussion 2--Aug 23, 30(1)pgs, Mike Robertson, Rt. 1, Box 95, Maple Valley, Wash., 98038. Mimeo, 25(5), 3.

Dangling Conversation, The 4--Aug 16, 44pgs, Dave Esser, DCTC. Sorry, copies unavailable to all. If you're interested in the DCTC you probably know about this.

Epix 2--Aug 16, 4pgs, Derrill Rothermich, RA1691777, 3rd Enlisted Student Btry., Fort Bliss, Tex. 79916. Litho, membership? The Adventure Heroes Club has this bulletin they pub in between issues of their mag AH Hideaway. This second issue was the first to be edited by Derrill and with him on the job you find an otherwise useless thing turned into an interesting little mag.

ERB-dom 21--Aug 7, 24pgs, Camile Cazedessus, Box 555, Breckenridge, Colo., 80424. ERB, litho, 50(0), 5.

Fandom-Onium 2--Aug 4, 46pgs; Al McCaughan, 621 Ivy, Glendale, Calif., 91204. Ditto, 35(10), 2plus. Maybe a 3 to strip/fiction fiends.

Fantasm 1--Aug 11, 20 7" x 8½" pgs, Mark Podlin, 1878 Derrill Dr., Decatur, Ga., 30032. Litho, 40(0), reprints the comics code stuff from a booklet which anyone can have from a booklet anyone can get from the CCA for 25¢. I wonder if there's copyright on those rules of some kind?

Fantasy advertiser 10--Aug 14, 18(6)pgs, Frank Dobson, 22 Clarendon Rise, Lewisham, London, SE 13, England. Mimeo, 15(0), 5. This could be YOUR chance to pick up some European correspondents for exchanging stuff. It's an ad-zine.

Fanzine Illustrated 5--Aug 23, 32(1)pgs, John Furek, 1436 First Ave; Berwick, Pa., 18603. Ditto, 25(10), 3.

Gosh Wow! 1--August 15, 80(3)pgs, Bob Schoenfeld, 9516 Minerva, St. Louis, Mo., 63114. Litho, \$1.00(0). John hadn't received his copy in time to include it, so I'll just tell you that this mag is so good that it deserves a "6" if there were one.--modest Ed.

K-Alpha 34--Aug 15, 54pgs, Dor. & Maggie Thompson, 8786 Hendricks Rd., Mentor, Ohio, 44060. Ditto, mimeo, litho, membership required, 5.

Newfangles 3--Aug 7, 2pgs, Don & Maggie (same as above), 3 for 25¢, 5. Little, faaanish, news-zine...nice.

OTDB 15--September 1, 12pgs. "I must admit it's getting better."

Panelologist, The 3--Aug 24, 4-half-size pgs, Jerry Bails, Box 7499 N. End Station, Detroit, Mich., 48202. Litho, 8 for a dollar (none sold separate), 5.

Quantum 1--Aug 16, 12(1)pgs, Steve Carlberg, Box 37, Nicoma Park, Ok., 73006. 30(10), 1.

Sanctum 8--July 31, 34(2)pgs, Steve Johnson, 1018 No. 31 St; Corvallis, Ore. 97330. Mimeo, 25(10), 3.

Scarf, The one shot--Aug 23, 28(14)pgs, Gary Acord, 1119 N. Clinton, Dallas, Tex., 75208. as, Ditto, 20(?), 2.

Sense of Wonder 2--Aug 25, 40(1)pgs, Bill Schelly, 881 Lovington Dr., Pittsburgh, Pa., 15216. Ditto, 35(10). This zine, like so awfully many today, contains a lot of ama strips and fan fiction. Since so many fans do not agree with my views on the subject, I can only suggest that you buy a copy and see how you like it. The zine has fine printing and layout--and all I can say is that how it rates with you will depend on your interest in this sort of thing. I'm not going to argue with those of you who turn this stuff out by the ton as to its value--but by the same time my ratings are entirely subjective and if you don't agree--publish your own index! I'm not doing this for myself.

Shroud Vol 2, No 1--Aug 21, 22pgs, Tony Rutherford, 1046 Jackson Ave; Huntington, WVa., 25704. Ditto, 20(10) and if you liked Sense of Wonder, be sure not to miss Shroud--it's right up your alley.

Stories of Suspense 4--Aug 14, 40(1)pgs, Marv Wolfman, 142-18 59th Ave; Flushing, NY., 11355. Ditto, 20(5), 4.

Super adventures Special Issue 7--Aug 10, 40(1) plus four 8½ x 14 pgs, Marv Wolfman (same as above), Ditto, 25(5) only for those purchasing #6 and not available to others, 4.

Texans Only 6--Aug 23, 30(11)pgs, Gary Acord, 1119 N. Clinton, Dallas, Tex., 75208. Ditto, 35(10), 2. This is the final issue--and it's only available to texans.

Whitman one shot--Aug 9, 30(3)pgs, Dale Manesis, 2002 No. 49th St., Milwaukee, Wisc., 53208. Mimeo, \$1.00(0), rating will depend on your need for listings and such on Whitman's Big Little Books and other publications. Much data is given and it should be valuable to collectors of this material.

Wizit 1--July 31, 8, 6" x 8" pgs, Chuck Rogers, 709 Burgeses Ln., Virginia Bch., Va., 23452. Litho, as, 20(0), 2. Here's another example of wasted offset in amazingly short strips with bad art and text. If you like Rogers'

art or want to keep the zine alive for upcoming & possible material by Chesney, Kuhfeld, Fletcher & others, buy it.

Bronze Shadows 11--Aug 14, 20pgs, Fred Cook, 503 Terrill St., Grand Haven, Mich., 49417, xerox, 35(10), 5 to fans of old pulp mags...less to others.

Ecco 2--Aug 26, Randy Williams, Box 581 Liberty, No. C., 27298. This zine covers sf, horror, and other fields and has little to offer the comic fan. 40(1)pgs, mimeo, 20(10), worth it to multi-fans.

A SPECIAL REPORT... ON THE JMS ENTERPRISES SURVEY

As we write this, survey cards are still coming in from all sections of the U.S.A. --even from our neighbors to the north and south: Canada and Mexico! So far, we've received well over 600 cards, not to mention many informative letters -- all of which have been quite enthusiastic about our future endeavors into the comic magazine field!

Although it is impossible for us to answer each card and letter individually, we do appreciate the great interest which has been shown. And we hope that Fandom will be patient for a while longer until we are finished compiling the survey results.

At that time, we will be circulating a ready sheet similar to this giving the results of the survey, announcing the winners of the five-dollar prizes and hopefully, give Fandom an idea of what we will be producing in the way of comic magazines!

Copies of the survey are available through OTDB 10, Gosh Wow! #1 or by a stamped, see from the editor.



GATEWAY CON II

To attend: \$2.50 to Bob Schoenfeld
Dealers: tables are only \$3 each.
Banquet rates and room prices to
be announced next issue.

Gateway Con II:
June 28-30, Ben Franklin Motor
Hotel--825 Washington...right
in the heart of downtown St.
Louis!

"Con" is a formal term for a fan get-together...and as such it doesn't really do justice to Gateway Con. Oh, we call it a "con" but we'd rather do things our own way and that means making things more informal and friendly. Why the whole reason we're holding this con is to meet you folks out there... So, you may ask, what's in it for you...well, we've got this round-table discussion coming up in which everyone gets a chance to say his piece, we've got films for the cinema bugs--Flash Gordon in fact, starring Buster Crabbe, we've got displays of rare comics from many different countries, displays of fanzines and thousands of comics for sale and trade. Like to see original art? Well, the walls of the con will be covered with art...and so lucky fans will be taking several pieces of that art home with them. Copies of "Cavalcade of American Comics" will be distributed and we've got an offset souvenir booklet for all attending.

Saint Louis In 1968

Don't
Miss
It!



Saturday night there's a big fan banquet. Roy Thomas, our Guest of Honor, will speak after the dinner--and of course, will be around all three days for fans to meet and talk to (who knows but what he may even of published AE in time!). Dealers will be there...fans you've read of and corresponded with...the entire Gateway Club...and even a few surprises. During the months leading up to the con we'll be setting up more films (including a few SF thrillers like the silent classic, Metropolis), collecting more and more original art and doing everything in our power to make this a memorable weekend for all concerned. Furthermore, copies of the con souvenir booklet will be made available to anyone who would like one at a price soon to be determined, so be sure to watch OTDB and Gosh Wow! for future announcements. Make your plans well in advance, friends, because Gateway Con II is gonna be one of--if not the finest fan get-together in America!



UNDER THE UPAS TREE

Columnal Commentary
By Larry Brody

According to the dictionary, the Upas is a tree in Java through which a poisonous sap flows. According to the comic fan's friend and companion, the good doctor Wertham, it is the comic book industry. He quotes Byron and Pushkin, as if their allusions to the Upas tree could lend credence to his theory of the malignant nature of comic books. Well, the name of this column is "Under The Upas Tree" and from where I sit (under the "evil" branches and against the "perverted" trunk--and beside a host of other readers and devotees of what Jerry Bails so loftily calls panel art) the only thing I can sense running inside the old tree is that rather innocuous substance known as entertainment.

Still--the Upas Tree.

The savages, I'm told, used its poison to insure the deadliness of their arrows.

The upas tree.

Entertainment.

It could be that Wertham was partially right. But what destroys today's comic book reader is not psychotic tales and twisted morals. It is, rather, that substance which isn't as innocuous as it seems.

That deadly, dull entertainment.

How many times have you read the same story lately?

Now that's poison.

Panel art--how old, fifty years? Or older than that, as old as the pictures on Fred Flintstone's wall? At least as old as King Tut's smile?

Some of the stories in this month's batch (pick any publisher, any one at all) read as if they're even older.

Yet we study comics in courses in Modern Letters at the more enlightened universities.

Modern? Rick Weingroff talks about them as mythology and forgets how efficiently Homer told it all.

Modern? "Hang loose, pussycats!" Stan Lee says. But how many times is jolly Ben going to turn against his friends? And how many times has it been done since Milton told all about Lucifer and his departure from his heavenly friends? How many times before?

Modern? "And this," says Gardner Fox, "is how _____ (fill in the blank) really occurred exactly _____ (fill it in again if you can) years ago." Did God take the Hebrews across the Red Sea? Or was it Green Lantern? The original Flash?

So maybe, just maybe, Dr. Frederick is right. Maybe comics do kill. But if so it's because they're so goddamn up-tight blaaaaaand and not for all the horror some folks think they show.

(They tell me the Fantastic Four have Meaning--and I shake my head.

(They tell me the Fantastic Four are Profound--and I cry out in despair.

(They tell me the Fantastic Four say it like it is--and I say 'you haven't seen it yet.'

(The Inhuman masterpiece, they cry!--and I say come back in five years, when you've grown up just a little and are no longer excited about being told in simple words and simpler pictures everything that you have seen on TV or read in your Bible about brotherly love and the shtick that endures. I say come back when you've read what you haven't already learned for yourself, when you've seen what Sartre and Camus and even Nietzsche have to say about things you've never even thought of. Come back then and tell me it's a masterpiece.

(A masterpiece, a true work of art, makes you stop and think and answer the question it has posed. It does not, as the FF or any "good" comic does, make you nod your head and think, 'Yeah, I noticed that just the other day.')

So maybe Fred is more right than he knows.

But don't make me grow up--don't take my comics away. Let me enjoy. Comic books are innocent, and I've got other places to turn if I feel like a good think, so let me enjoy.

Let me sit under the Upas Tree and die a little.

Other things are dying, too.

Some fans worry that the whole tree is starting to collapse.

Two things bother them. Two things bother me. One is the King comic-pak idea, and the other is the decline in the amount of titles now available and the deaths--past and soon to be announced--of various marginal publishers.

The King idea is beautiful, a merchandiser's dream. Make your magazines non-returnable and cut down on your losses. Sell them as toys or bread or guns (in most rural families, by the way, there are more restrictions on a youngster's purchase of comic books than on his buying guns). The newsdealer buys your little packages of three and they're his and only his. Sure, it makes things like continuity of issues rough, but you make money, Jack, and that's what the entertainment business is all about.

(That's what everything's all about, for that matter.)

So King goes into action, and the stores start buying. Not the little guys, the guys who already carry Spidey and True Love and GoGo, no, not them, but the big toy stores, the all-night grocery and drug combines which never used to carry anything more panel-art than a Superman coloring book on their shelves.

It's hard to tell so early, but the system seems to be working. Does this mean that comic books as we know them, as they sit there in the rack on the corner being rained on and snowed on and tugged at and glanced through, torn and smudged and so-marvelously, excitedly, breathlessly awaited each month are doomed? Are their days as numbered as their covers? Will the rest of the industry follow suit and drop their old lines of supply, changing everything?

And everything would have to be changed. How can you number or date what might (and probably will) have to sit out on the stands or shelves for month after month after month? How can you continue stories or just follow up old adventures when you, the publisher, have no way of knowing who or how many, if any, readers have seen the last ish? When you, the publisher, have no way of knowing if the reader even knew what he'd just bought was the last ish? "I got a Batman!" Tommy shouts. "Me too!" says fat Bill. "At Whatchacallit's store?" "At Whatchacallit's store," says fat Bill. "Then how come?" asks Tommy, "yours is different than mine?"

Milton Bradley makes a game in October, has it in the stores by November--follow? Five months later MB sends another shipment of the same game to the same stores. The kid who bought his outfit in November and the kid who bought his in April have the same game. Right?

But comic books aren't toys or games, and they change from month to month. Like planned obsolescence. When fat Bill sees April's Metamorpho and finds that its cover is nicer than October's, he's going to buy the April issue. The storekeeper gets stuck with a pile of Octobers and stops buying. End of comic business. Or, the publishers get smart. They stop numbering. They stop dating. They stop changing the covers. Only the stories are different. (Why even bother with that?) The kid buys April's or October's; he doesn't know which he has until he's paid his money (those plastic bags aren't to be opened, are they?).

Comic-paks mean fandom's in trouble. Collecting will become of game of chance.

So will enjoyment.

Will comic-paks prevail? I'm an optomist; I doubt it. Too many stores have been weaned off comic material. Too many toy stores remember the theft problem they used to have, or the irate mother problem, to plunge into volume comic book buying. They might carry one

publisher's titles, but I doubt if they'd want more. Also, the comic book industry cannot survive without the local newsdealer. There aren't, as I've said, enough marketplaces for all without old one-legged Jed at the corner. And old one-legged Jed stays in business because he doesn't have to come up with any cash and actually buy anything he sells. He stays alive because he gets it all on consignment and can return what's left over. Dirty Jed (the girly mags are on that other rack in the back) isn't going to want any part of King-type comic-paks and the cost they entail.

I hope.

The other big worry these days is the demise of Mighty Comics, Thunder's boys, Charlton's super-hero line-up, etc. I don't know; when I think of Mighty Comics, Thunder and Company, Charlton's Star-Studded like attempts, I get kind of glad they're disappearing. It makes the readable stuff easier to find.

Still, there may be a problem if it is shown that comic sales in general are on the decline. If the reason for the closing-up of various publishing houses' comic book lines is merely that the demand didn't go up as much as was expected, then I'm not bothered. The settled companies, the big ones, the ones worth buying, can take that kind of thing in stride.

But if the little people who account for most ~~comic~~ comic book sales are slowing down, if less total comics were sold last year than the year before, then there may be trouble. The wise publishers will cut down. The stupid ones will do us a favor and upgrade their mags in an attempt to attract new readers. The not-quite-so-stupid ones will downgrade their mags (isn't television's FF something?) in an attempt to grab the wee-ones or their mothers.

Comic fans are always demanding more. More titles, more quality, more change. It may be that comicdom is entering a period when economic facts dictate that these demands be ignored. Flaunted, in fact, as companies are forced to consolidate. Pain. Anger. Hot flashes. The thing to remember is simply this: You and I become disappointed. I lose a little pleasure, but publishers, writers and artists lose money--they become hungry. And there's nothing we can do to prevent it.

Wait. Maybe there is.

Maybe.

You could buy ten copies of all your favorites, but when you get down to the proverbial nitty-gritty it's the teeny-weenies who keep National and Marvel (all right, so with Marvel they're slightly bigger) going.

The solution?

More teeny-weenies.

Now if I could only figure out how...



Within two months of being printed, Gosh Wow! number 1 was completely sold out. It was hailed by fans and pros alike as one of the finest zines since the days of Alter Ego! Can you afford to pass up Number 2??

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We suggest, even though #2 is not due out until January, that fans place their orders early so as not to be left out. The print run will be limited to 750 copies and you can bet they won't last long. The above is but a partial listing of contents--more features will be added as we near the deadline, but don't hesitate to order your copies now for Gosh Wow! #2 will be a fanzine to remember!

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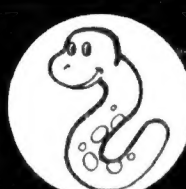
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WATCH FOR OUR ADVERTISEMENTS!!

UNDER THE ARCH

Important editorial here...many things to say...not much room...bear with me...

First: This issue is late again. We're sorry; it couldn't be helped. And we're likely to be late next time, too. Important problems have crept up for Dave and there is nothing we can do in the meantime.

Last ish, much as I talked about it, was obviously not wrap-around. We have learned why (thanks to Al Kuhfeld) and are taking steps (experimental for us) to rectify the situation. Hope for the best and this ish should be wrap around.

Last ish we tried an experiment to see how OTDB would fare if sent without being folded in half. Many copies arrived in x-1'nt condition...other arrived like the postman had used them for a door mat...others simply didn't arrive. We've learned our lesson and appologize to fans whose copies did arrive in bad shape.

As a result of several recent ads we've brought in a large, unfilled response for copies of #15. Unfortunately, that ish sold out before many requests could be filled and those of you receiving this will now know why. Also, in view of this increased readership, we are forced to increase our print run and our subscription rates. Henceforth, subs to OTDB are as follows: 12 issues folded-\$2.50 (Academy members-\$2.00) 12 flat issues-\$3.70 (Academy-\$3.20). Single issues are still 25¢/35¢.

For the benefit of new readers and fans who missed last ish I'll try to include a listing of recently-defunct comic titles. During the last few months many titles have dissapeared and a listing might be in order.

-----oOo-----

Now available through the Gateway Club is a publication called The Comic Fan's Guide To Periodical Literature. This is an index to periodical literature which we think will be of some interest to comic fans. The Guide covers over 400 different sources of information and, unlike the conventional Reader's Guide found in most libraries, this index takes in the scope of technical journals as well. Perhaps many of you never realized just how much information there is on comics in your local library, but the problem is knowing how to locate it. It is published in mimeograph and is 30 pgs long. The cost, contrary to the rate advertised in the latest RBCC, is only 60¢. The Guide is published by John and Tom McGeehan in cooperation with the GCAFC and the Boston University School of Communications. Copies may be ordered through Charles Eichler, 1319 Mendell Dr; University City, Mo. 63130.



I must announce that Gosh Wow! #1 is now sold out. Orders received are now being applied toward copies of #2. As you can see by the advertisement elsewhere in this issue, #2 is now open for orders. The cost is \$1 and you can expect it in or around the first of the year. We suggest an early order for those of you unfortunate enough to have missed it.

The print run for this issue is being increased, as is the number of pages. Neither of these developments is particularly pleasing for it means that it is going to cost us much more to produce. I'm not sure if I'll have to have 600 or 700 copies made, but either way things aren't getting any cheaper so please take note of the increased subscription price when ordering. OTDB is again open for advertisements and, in fact, solicit same. Our rate is only slightly cheaper than that of the RBCC, but believe us that is couldn't be any cheaper. Ads can only be accepted for fanzines or fanactivities and please write before submitting.

-----oOo-----

Off the subject here, I'd like to talk about something of personal intrest--popular music. I've been a "more or less" fan of rock & roll music for some time, but as of late I've gained a much more serious intrest in view of several exciting (to me) events. To make it even more interesting I've discovered that many comic fans share my intrest, and we would like to hear from some of the rest of you. Mayhap a column or zine could be produced to cater to comic fans with this intrest. It seems that among fandom's rock-heads I can list Gary Brown, Alan Hutchinson, Bill Spicer, Sherman and Wayne Howard, Earl Blair, Doug Potter, Steve Grant, Tony Cabanellas, and Steve Johnson. I wouldn't mind hearing from other R&R enthusiasts, but be warned, if you're a Monkees fan you'd best forget it. Oh, yes, every rock & roll fan should be a regular reader of Crawdaddy--a magazine I've found to be The Best for the rock-fan. Copies are 50¢ to Paul Williams, 319 Sixth Avenue, NY, NY. 10014.

-----oOo-----

New Addresses:

Marge Gemignani, 508 S St. Andrews Pl; Los Angeles, Calif. 90005.

Ken Keller, 1555 8th Ave; San Diego, Cal. 92101.

Bob Latona, A-114a/G-South, SUNY, Stony Brook, LI; NY. 11790.

Raymond Miller, RD #1, Box 131-C; Creekside, Pa. 15732.

Gary Brown, USF 1700, Univ of So. Fla., Tampa, Fla. 33620.

Kent Russell, 106 Craig Dr; Athens, Tex. 75751.

Ben Katchor, 959 Carroll St; Brooklyn, NY. 11225.

BOB SCHOENFELD

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Overseas copies are 50¢ to everybody no matter what. Ad rates are \$3 per quarter page. Back issues of #7,8, 10-14 can be had for 25¢ each...also copies of TCR 42 & 46 for 50¢ each.

Art and news contributions are always needed. News should be sent to Dave Kaler for verification. Artists should send samples of their work.

OTDB 9 and 15 are sold out as is Gosh Wow! #1.

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